



# Breast Care Coordinator

At the 375th Medical Group we have a Breast Care Coordinator (BRIN officer) that tracks, counsels and supports all women diagnosed with breast cancer at Scott and also conducts Breast Health Classes for awareness. However, she does not schedule women for Mammograms as that is done through your provider. The BRIN officer can be reached at (618) 256-7523.

For more information, call the National Cancer Institute's Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237); TTY at 1-800-332-8615. The call is free and a trained information specialist is available to answer your questions.

The National Cancer Institute has booklets and other materials for patients, health professionals, and the public. These publications discuss types of cancer, methods of cancer treatment, coping with cancer, and clinical trials. Some publications provide information on tests for cancer, cancer causes and prevention, cancer statistics, and NCI research activities. NCI materials on these and other topics may be ordered online from the NCI Publications Locator Service at <http://publications.nci.nih.gov> or by telephone from the Cancer Information Service toll free at 1-800-4-CANCER.

A list of organizations and websites that offer information and services for cancer patients and their families is available on CancerNet at <http://www.cancer.gov>.

## What are the risks of breast cancer?

More women in the United States get breast cancer than any other type of cancer (except for skin cancer). The number of cases per 1,000 women has increased slightly every year over the last 50 years. It is the second leading cause of death from cancer in women (lung cancer causes the most deaths from cancer in women).

Anything that increases a person's chance of developing a disease is called a risk factor. Some of these risk factors for breast cancer are as follows:

- **Age** - Breast cancer is more likely to develop as you grow older. Beginning menstruation at an early age and late age at first birth may also increase the risk of development of breast cancer.
- **History of Breast Cancer** - If you have already had breast cancer, you may be more likely to develop breast cancer again.
- **Family History** - If your mother or sister had breast cancer, you may be more likely to develop breast cancer, especially if they had it at an early age.
- **Other Breast Diseases** - If you have had a breast biopsy specimen that showed certain types of benign breast conditions, you may be more likely to develop breast cancer. For

most women, however, the ordinary "lumpiness" they feel in their breasts does not increase their risk of breast cancer.

## **What are the screenings that detect breast cancer?**

**Mammogram** - A mammogram is a special x-ray of the breast that can often find tumors that are too small for you or your doctor to feel. Your doctor may suggest that you have a mammogram, especially if you have any of the risk factors listed above.

The usefulness of mammograms may be different depending on your age. Following is the current information about breast cancer screening with mammography for three age groups of women.

- **Ages 40-49** = Some studies that have been done show that breast cancer screening with mammography reduces the number of deaths from breast cancer in these women. If you are in this age group, talk to your doctor about mammography as a regular part of your health care plan.
- **Ages 50-69** = Many studies have shown that regular breast cancer screening with mammography reduces the number of deaths from breast cancer for women aged 50-69. If you are in this age group, talk to your doctor about mammography as a regular part of your health care plan.
- **Ages 70 and over** = Very few studies give information about how effective breast cancer screening is for women aged 70 and over. However, the risk of breast cancer increases with age, and the age at which screening is no longer useful in reducing death from breast cancer is not known. If you are in this age group, talk to your doctor about mammography as a regular part of your health care plan.

**Clinical Breast Examination** - During your routine physical examination, your doctor or health care professional may do a clinical breast examination (CBE). During a CBE, your doctor will carefully feel your breasts and under your arms to check for lumps or other unusual changes.

**Breast Self-Examination** - When you examine your own breasts it is called breast self-examination (BSE). Studies so far have not shown that BSE alone reduces the number of deaths from breast cancer. Therefore, it should not be used in place of clinical breast examination and mammography. Your doctor can talk to you about what types of screening tests would be best for you.